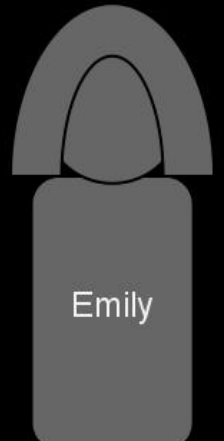
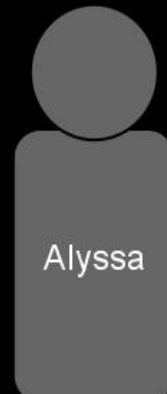
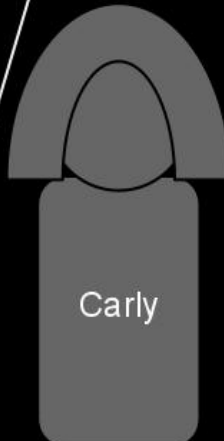
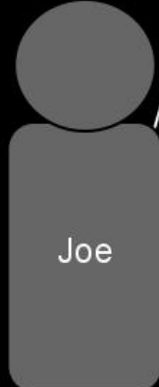
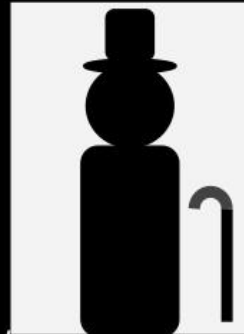


# TICK....TOCK....

*Will YOU*

*Make it Out?*



## PROLOGUE

Trick-or-treating is something almost every kid and parent enjoys. Most of the time its fun, because you join up with friends, put on costumes, walk around at night, and the obvious...GET FREE CANDY!!! It's something anyone of any age can do. So now if Halloween is here, and trick-or-treating is really like everything we say, and about every kid on the block is out trick-or-treating, why are some parents worried? Well that's because this one night a long time ago has made some people really nervous and scared. It's about these six kids who mysteriously disappear on Halloween night. Word is they were good kids and all, but they had made a spirit angry. And for that they were kidnapped and now there are only stories about what might have happened to them. There is one story in particular that is the most popular and plausible. The story goes something like this:

## Chapter 1:

Six kids, Alyssa, Josh, Carly, Erin, Joseph, and Emily, are in their costumes and are out at each house on their block saying “Trick-or-treat!” when the door opens. They take handfuls of candy, stuff them in their pillow cases, and head out into the night for more fun and delight. All of these kids are in 7th grade, have been best friends since 3rd grade, and always go trick-or-treating together.

“Hey! Let’s go to that house over there!” Josh pointed. “It’s huge! I bet those people are rich and they can give us lots of candy!”

“Yeah, right. They all give us the same amount!” Joe replied.

They headed over to the house and Josh tried to break the door, banging hard on the wood. The door was opened by a sweet woman dressed up as a cowgirl. She took her bowl of mints and gave each kid 3 pieces. Then she shut the door.

“Well, I like her!” said Alyssa, “She gave us mints, my favorite!”

“Come on, guys. It’s getting late. I bet it’s 9:00 p.m. already, my parents are going to be livid.” said Emily. She was not a fan of staying up late, and neither being out in the dark with no adult.

“Hey, how about that house?” exclaimed Joe.

“Nah, that’s lame. What about those two houses? They look pretty scary.” said Carly.

“Guys!” shouted Emily, “Come on already!”

“Alright, alright. Let’s go...”

“WOW! Check *that* house! It’s got all blinking lights and a giant cat on the roof, and some old zombie hanging from the porch...and...and...the front yard’s a graveyard, with pumpkins and skeletons! Cool! We HAVE to go to that one! It’ll be our last! Then we can go home! I promise! It’d be a shame to miss getting candy from such an awesome house! Please??” Josh yelled. He was begging and bouncing on his knees as if he was on a sugar high.

Now even Emily was smiling. Everyone could tell that they wanted to go to that house. It would be the perfect finale to end their great day. They all ran to the house, slowing down as they passed the lawn, peering at the weird and funky faces popping out of the grass. When they reached the door, Joe was about to knock when all of a sudden this horrid, ear-popping scream pierced the air. It was the sound of a witch, and when they looked up, they saw the mechanical mannequin in the window. Her mouth was blinking red, her eyes slimy green, her nose warty and long. The kids were mad at first because they got the scare of their lives and almost wet their pants! But they got over it and said “It’s OK, just part of the trick.” Perhaps this person prefers to give them a trick instead of a treat. Joe knocked on the door and a man in old, ripped clothes came out, staring at them. He seemed to be, glowing. Or was that just some cool, new cream or something? The kids didn’t care. His costume was great though! He looked like a total mixture of a zombie, a ghost, and a ghoul. “Trick-or-treat!” The man started to mumble as though he was trying to say something, but didn’t know the same language as them. Then he smiled and went back inside for 3 seconds, and came out with a steaming bowl of fog. He said something like “Reach in and get your candy.” All the kids were a little nervous, except the usual hiper and enthusiastic kid, Joshua Flamingston. (Also known as Josh) He proudly stepped up and jammed his grubby pink arm into the bowl. He felt around, just plastic stuff.

“Probably some wrappers” he thought. Then he pulled out what seemed to be a long glow stick, but when his hand came out of the fog... **“HISSSSS!”**

“Ahhhhhh!!!” Josh hurled the snake on the ground and stepped on it a hundred times. The man laughed and threw his head back. He screamed and stomped in satisfaction of seeing their frightened, pale faces. He howled and hooted and laughed in their faces. But soon he quited and calmed down, after seeing the kids’ changed expressions. Emily was nearly crying, Alyssa and Erin were sad and trying to comfort Emily. Josh and Joe were also scared, but more mad for what just happened to them.

“Are you out of your mind?!! Have you gone crazy? What kind of person are you! That was so mean scaring us and then laughing crazy in our faces! That was a mean and harsh prank! We’re only kids! You don’t expect us to act as though this is a normal everyday thing!” Josh was REAL mad now.

The man stared at them blankly, wondering.

“I’m sorry. I did not mean to scare you that much. It was just to cause some laughter. Please forgive me. I am truly sorry.” The man said this in a creepy way.

“Alright. I guess it was a good scare.” Josh was calming down.

“Yes. And now to show my shame, I will give you all an extra treat. Here, give me your bag.” The man reached over. Josh gave him his bag and right when the man was about to touch it, Josh yanked it away from him and screamed in his confused face “PSYCH!” Josh laughed and laughed and he was finally able to pull himself together and say:

“Ha ha! You really think I’m *that* stupid that I’d fall for your trick again? Wrong! How stupid *are* you? You dummy! Grown ups don’t know how to pull pranks! Kids do! Thanks for nothing. Oh yeah, and thanks for ruining our night, oldie.”

The man’s face turned red, his eyes turned red and narrow, his body was rising slowly, while glowing brighter and brighter green. He started mumbling while getting louder and louder. Suddenly, the man yanked Josh by the neckline of his costume and pulled him inside the spooky house. Then he slammed the door shut.

## Chapter 2:

Emily, Carly, Erin, Alyssa, and Joe stood there staring at each other with wide eyes. In a moment, they all snapped out of their trance and started banging on the door trying to get the man to let Josh out. They heard crashes and shouts from inside and Joe even tried to break the window with a rock. They all cried “Let him go! Let him out!” The man finally opened the door and the kids saw his mouth covered in blood.

“What did you do to our friend?!” Joe screamed. “Where is he?” Joe suddenly got really mad and simply lost it. He shoved the man out of his way and ran into the house, yelling Josh’s name repeatedly. Erin and Alyssa started screaming:

“Stop! Stop! Come back!”.

They ran in after Joe. Carly and Emily scrambled off the porch and were about to run away to find help when the ghost man somehow got in front of them and blocked their way. He pushed out his pale white hands that looked old and worn away like the epitaph on a gravestone. It seemed as if he was about to blast them with acid. But a powerful wind came and pushed Carly and Emily into the house. Scary music began to play out of nowhere in the dark room. They heard wicked laughter a witches’ scream. The door slammed shut for the second time that night, and there was pitch blackness and complete silence. The girls started calling for their friends and could barely hear the faint sobbing in the distance. They listened for a second and followed the sound to a corner of the house. There was a little boy, about 7 or 8 years old, cowering and shaking in fear. “W-who a-are yo-you?” he stuttered after noticing them coming his way. “C-c-

an you h-help me?" Carly and Emily sat down next to the boy and asked him how he got there. "T-the same w-way you t-two got here. By being horrible, mean, selfish, and bratty kids!" Suddenly, the kid's voice became a rough, mean and manly voice. He rose and rose until he had the same exact figure as the ghostly man outside.

"Muhahahaha! Bwahahaha!" he cried. The girls screamed, got up, and ran away from the man. The crisp blinding moonlight shining through the window was the only light in the house, and Emily squinted through it, trying to find the door.

"There!" she pronounced. "Come on!" She grabbed hold of Carly and ran to the door. She groped at the door until she found the knob. Emily yanked for her life, pulling and pushing and screaming at the same time.

"It won't open! It's locked! But there's no way to unlock it! How can it be locked from the *outside*?!"

Before the girls could even blink, a bright light filled the room. Carly turned around and saw Joe, Josh, Erin and Alyssa lined up against the back wall. Carly rushed over to them with Emily following. They all hugged each other, forgetting at the moment about "cooties". The ghostly man jumped in front of them. They all screamed.

"A-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha! You children are such scardy-cats! I think, that even when a baby would say 'boo', you all would run away screaming your heads off! Are you *that* afraid? I bet you kids can't even walk through a haunted house without shivering at every step you take! Right? "

The kids stared in wonder. What was this man talking about? They looked each other in awe. What should they do now? Talk with him to figure out what he was trying to say? Figure out a plan to escape? Scream and run like crazy? Apparently the troublemaker had the answer to this.

"What's your name?" Josh said.

The man was looking out towards the window when Josh asked this. He snapped his head around and thought for a moment, as if trying to remember who he was.

"My name? Well, my name is...Theodore Ryan Parks." he exclaimed holding his head high. "And you! What might your name be? Scardy-puss? Mua-ha-ha-ha-ha!"

"No! It's Josh Flamingston! *Bozo*...." Josh muttered the last word.

But the man heard.

"What did you call me? You don't dare anger Theodore Parks! You will regret it! You had some nerve calling me those names! HA! Children...children can pull pranks? I think / can pull pranks. I'm much talented. I, in fact, invented my own labyrinth. Perhaps....**THAT'S IT!** You children shall play in my labyrinth! Get through, all of you, in one piece. And you're free. Hm? Fair enough?"

Mr. Parks exclaimed the last words softly while the other words were an abundance of shouts that rattled the cracked gray ceiling.

"Labyrinth? What labyrinth?" Carly asked. She didn't understand.

"It's a fair trade. You get through the labyrinth, I let you go. You fail to get through, I

keep two of the six of you, and you work as my servant for 20 years . Deal?" Mr. Parks smiled deviously.

Twenty years? What was this man thinking? The children were not about to accept any offer of the sort.

"No! Never! Just let us go! We won't accept your offer! Neither one of us will be your servant! LET US GO!" Joe exclaimed.

Mr. Parks chuckled. "Ah. But that's where your wrong, young boy. Either accept my off..well...'challenge', and try to win so you all can escape, or refuse and you *all* will be my servants!"

The kids were really confused now, what should they do? What *had* they done to make this man do what he's doing? Josh! He had made the ghost man angry by being rude and pulling a prank in revenge. But now what could they do? They had to get out of here, but how? The children saw only one way at the time. And to see their families and siblings ever again, they would have to use that way. So they did, they accepted the challenge of Mr. Parks' labyrinth. And suddenly, the lights went out.

## Chapter 3:

So now Josh, Emily, Joe, Erin, Carly and Alyssa have accepted Mr. Parks challenge. A cold chill filled the room. No one knew what would happen next.

"Look," said Erin.

They saw a small faint blue light down the long hallway. They were somehow attracted to it, and walked down the endless path. It seemed as though they would never get to the light. Then, a small red spark appeared. Another. Then another. One more. They were increasing by the second. Suddenly, a huge spark came and shot straight up. It exploded in a colorful firework and the horrid ghost man, Mr. Parks, emerged from the blue light.

"Welcome!" he shouted as if there was an audience other than the kids. "Welcome, to my labyrinth! This is your once in a lifetime chance to get the honor to go through the twisty maze and games. In this labyrinth, you will see things you never saw before, experience things like you never did before and scream like there's no tomorrow! Which there won't be, by the way. Hehehe" he chuckled. Erin rolled her eyes.

"How much longer is this going to take until we can get out?" Erin said with an impatient tone in her voice.

"Oh. My poor child. You think this is a matter of minutes, don't you? Well it's not my dear." Mr. Parks exclaimed with what seemed to be a hint of pity. "This 'situation' you've aroused is going to take much longer than minutes. It's going to take quite some time to go through my labyrinth. And time is a ticking. So I suggest you put those brains to work." And with that, he disappeared into the shadows. And the lights went out again. Suddenly, the lights came back on and in front of them stood a bush. To the right, another bush. To the left, there was a path. That was the way to go.

## Chapter 4:

The kids started their way through the first challenge, the MAZE. But when they walked five steps, the path divided. One path turned to the right, another path turned to the left, and the path they were walking on was still continuing straight.

“Where do we go?” Alyssa asked.

“Uhm. Let’s try the right path.” Joe said.

“Maybe we should go straight.” Carly said.

“I don’t like it here.” Emily said.

Josh just stood there, muttering to himself, kicking stones around.

“Hellooooo? Mister! Do you remember that *you* caused this whole problem? And now *you* should *at least* be helping *us* resolve it?” Erin said with her arms crossed over her chest.

Josh continued muttering with his hands stuffed into his pockets, pulling them out, then back in, out, in, out, in. Erin sighed and turned back to the rest of the group.

“No point. We’ll never get out here.”

“We have to try. Come on. Follow me.” Joe said. He led them down the right path. A while later, they turned left and followed that path. Then they turned left again and saw a red paper that looked like a note. Carly opened it and read it aloud.

“ ‘Dear horrible children,

If you have found this note, good job. I see you have made halfway to the end. It may seem easy right now since you’ve already made it halfway, but **the obstacle** will preclude you in every possible way..... Good luck. Although I’d hate to see you win.

-Mr. Parks ‘ ‘

Most of the kids were happy but Carly wasn’t. What obstacle? Was it harmful? When would it come? Those questions would be answered later. Right now they continued



their quest. After endless twists, turns, and arguments over which way to go, the kids finally found the red spark they had seen at Mr. Parks' house. They ran towards it when a prodigious Venus fly trap plant burst through the ground, startling them all. They jumped back, scared and frightened. The dark green, drooling monster was no ordinary work of nature. It snapped its mouth and moved it from side to side. Suddenly, Joe ran back towards the starting point of the maze. He came back a minute later with a sword.

"Where did you get that?" Alyssa yelled over the noise of the screaming monster.

"I saw it earlier, but I didn't think it was important. Apparently, it is." Joe replied.

All of the kids were backing up as the horrifying monster's roots began bursting through the ground toward them. Joe raised the sword and smacked it down hard on one of the vine-like roots. The monster cried in agony. But it was not about to give up yet. And neither was Joe. He got closer to the the plant and threatened it with the sword repeatedly. One of the roots sprang up and grabbed Joe from the waist. Joe shouted and struggled, but the root got tighter and tighter. Joe tossed the sword toward Josh. It landed with a thump near his feet. But Josh was too busy doing nothing to notice.

"Ugh!" Carly snatched the sword from the ground, not wasting any time wondering whether Josh would pick it up, and tried to hit the giant plant.

"Wait, I got it," Erin said. She had figured out a trick. She ran up to the monster and collapsed on the floor near its mouth. The plant smiled, showing its razor sheep teeth, and curled his vines around Erin.

"Now!" shouted Erin, still pretending to be dead.

Carly ran up to the monster and thrust the sword in its head. The monster let go of Joe and Erin and flapped around like a fish out of water. Then it lowered itself back into the ground, making moaning sounds.

"Phew. Thanks. Good distraction." Joe said.

Everyone just nodded their heads. Suddenly, they all turned to Josh, hands on their hips and frowning.

"Why didn't you do anything when I threw the sword toward you? This is a matter of life and death now! You have to pay more attention, or at least do what we ask you to do! We know you're not helping, whatever. But don't cause any more problems! OK?" Joe exclaimed. They all disdained him and walked away, going towards the red spark they had seen before. Josh followed silently. When they got to the red spark, Emily reached out and touched it, transporting them all to the next level.

## Chapter 5:

THUMP! They all landed with a hard fall on the cold cement underneath them. Everyone looked around, wondering where they were. They seemed to be at some sort of carnival. A sign pointed to building that looked like it had been there for over a hundred years. The sign said : **THIS WAY.... TO YOUR DOOM!** The kids simply shrugged and followed the sign. When they got to the front door, Erin didn't bother knocking and just opened the door and let herself in. The others followed closely behind. They saw that all of the walls were made of glass. It was like a hall of mirrors. As soon as they all stepped inside the trap, the door slammed shut. They all flipped themselves around at the sudden sound. It was just like those horror movies. You step inside, the door closes, your heart begins to race, you start to hear noises, then you simply go crazy and scream and shout and beg to be let out. But this was not a movie. It was real life. So the kids made their way through the "hall of mirrors". They began to hear a rumbling sound through the entire building. It got louder and louder as they progressed through. All of a sudden, there was a screeching sound, and two of the walls began to close in on the six kids. The kids panicked and ran randomly to nowhere, just trying to get away from the walls about to crush them. They ran into different rooms, and about every twenty seconds, another pair of walls began to close in. They tried every passageway, entrance, even traps. They were all locked in one room, made of wallpaper instead of glass, as all of the walls around them began to close in.

"What do we do now? We're stuck! We'll never get out! There's no way! W-we h-h-have to..." Emily cried.

"There has to be a way outta here! There always is! Don't you see those escape artists or magicians on TV or in a live show? They get in to those locked wooden boxes, and they escape before the box gets crushed or blown up. There's an escape route or path under the stage or a back door somewhere....THAT'S IT! There has to be some sort of back door or something." Joe said. He began to look around for a crack in the wall to show a hidden door.

Everybody began feeling against the walls for a secret door. Some stomped or

rubbed their feet against the ground ready for it to burst open and they would shoot down to a different place. They couldn't find one. They still looked. Suddenly, Alyssa yelled out

"I think I found it!"

Everybody rushed over to where she was standing. She told them there was a small crack shaped in a rectangle along the bottom of the wall. Yes, they could see it. But how would they open it? There had to be a way. Carly banged her foot against the wall. She banged it again. And again. Erin figured out what she was doing. Maybe they could break the wall and make their own opening. Erin banged with her. They kept banging while the others looked for a path. The walls were closing in on them. It was getting harder to look in the little space. And if there really was an escape route, it might have already passed with the closing walls. Emily was looking at the ceiling for a way out. She didn't need any help. If she simply reached up and stood on her tiptoes with her arms completely stretched out, she could have put her palms flat against the ceiling. That's how small it was getting. Carly continued banging in fury at the wall.

"Ugh! Why....won't....it.....OPEN??!!!" Carly hollered. She thumped her foot again and again. She got real mad and frustrated and started punching the wall with her fist.

"CALM DOWN!" Erin said. She grabbed Carly by the shoulders and ripped her away from the wall.

"There's no point in hurting yourself for this stupid labyrinth." Erin calmly said. She and Carly sat down in a corner away from the walls so that they would have time to get up before they were crushed.

"UGH!" Carly slammed her knee into the wall one last time.

BANG! Crack.....

Creeeeeeekkkkk.....

The door was open. They could get out.

## Chapter 6:

They quickly crawled through the opening in the door because it was so small. When they got through, they now had no idea how to close the door. Emily looked through. All she could see was a small space, where they were once standing. Now it had become so small that only three people crouched down and squished would be able to fit inside. The space got smaller and smaller. Soon, not even a baby could squeeze inside that little area. The walls suddenly became volatile and stopped moving. Emily stood back up.

"I guess that's it. We would have been squished to death if we didn't get out. Now what?" Emily said with a sigh.

No one knew 'now what'. They ignored her question and simply started walking along. Emily shrugged and followed them. They soon reached a sign that said:

**IF YOU HAVE MADE IT THIS FAR, GOOD JOB. KEEP GOING. THERE'S ONE MORE FRIEND I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET.....**

Erin and Alyssa groaned. Josh slumped and continued his game with his pockets. They walked on. Now they were in a building with a bunch of different rooms. There was no hallway. The rooms were connected to each other. Walk in one empty room, go through the exit, wind up in another.

"How much longer is Mr. Parks going to push us? If he doesn't stop pushing soon, we'll fall off the cliff!" Erin pointed out.

"Agreed." Joe said.

"RUN!" Alyssa screamed. She zoomed out of the room. Everybody looked to the doorway. A man in armor with a sword was hurtling himself towards the kids. He looked like a knight from the Dark Ages. Everybody started screaming and shouting and running in different directions. There was chaos all over again, just like the last two times they met an obstacle. Josh hid behind a corner of the wall of the room and jumped onto the man when he ran out, chasing Emily. Josh grabbed onto his neck and climbed on his back. The knight fell down because of the sudden attack. Josh ripped off his helmet and black dust abruptly swept the room like a giant broom. After the dust

cleared up, all that was left of the man was his armor. The kids slowly came out of their hiding places. Joe picked up the shield laying on the floor next to the arm. He looked at it for a second then threw it back down again.

"Thanks. Uhm...we better get going." Joe announced, staring at Josh. Then he whirled away with the others following. Josh put down the knights' helmet he had been holding. Then he ran and caught up with the others. Emily and Alyssa were beginning to worry. They were lost, hungry, scared and doomed. They hadn't eaten since breakfast, they couldn't find a way out of the labyrinth, and now it was getting dark. Erin kept trying to keep the mood happy by making facetious remarks but no one seemed to care, so she gave up. Every now and then she would hip bump Carly and give a small smile. Carly would smile back. But they both knew this was not a matter to be smiling about. So they continued on and on.

"I-I'm tired." Emily said with a yawn. "And hungry. Could this day get any worse?"

"It's OK. We'll find a way outta here." Joe said scratching his head.

"Uh, guys? I think that's our way out." Alyssa said. She pointed her finger to a doorway. They could see the other rides like the merry go round, the Ferris wheel, and the bouncy house. They slowly walked out of the building.

"Now what? Where do we go? What should we do? Should we talk to someone? Who could we talk to? Where's that psycho, Mr. Parks? Should we talk to him? What about that guy over there by the telephone? He looks reliable. Then again, no one here is probably reliable. I'm hungry. We haven't ate. Is there a diner somewhere? Who doesn't invent a carnival without food courts or diners?" Joe was losing it.

"SHUT UP!" Emily hollered with her hands crushing her scalp. "We already have enough problems! Pretty much, all of us are hungry. OK? And we don't need more questions, problems, situations...OR ANYTHING ELSE to solve! Jeez..."

Emily was losing it too. Joe was her best buddy and she had never talked to him like that. Even when he came over to her house for a play date in third grade, and stole her Barbie doll to use as a heroine for his action figures. Emily suddenly began crying with tears pouring out of her eyes like an overflowed pitcher of water. She ran away to a small gift shop nearby.

"Emily, wait!" Carly and Erin cried in unison. They both looked at each other and then ran after her. Alyssa didn't know what to do, so she followed.

Now only Joe and Josh were left behind. Joe stared at Josh. Josh simply stared back at Joe. They both looked at the gift shop. Emily was sitting on the counter top with her head buried in her knees. Erin was patting her back and Carly was saying something to her.

"Uhm...maybe, you should go say something to her." Josh said, still looking at the gift shop.

"Like what? Sorry? What for? What did I do wrong? She's the one who exploded!" Joe said with a confused yet angry look on his face.

“OK. OK. Just stating my opinion.” Josh said with both hands up to show his innocence.

Joe grunted.

“You know. Maybe this is just a big, stupid waste of time. Why not just give up? What’s the point in hurting ourselves and crying, and going through all this nonsense for no reason?” Josh exclaimed.

“Are you an idiot? Are you insane? Demented? Crazy? WHY?! Why on earth would we want to be a servant for a mentally deranged *ghost*?! Not even a man or a lady but a *ghost*! A spirit!” Joe screamed at Josh with his hands on his shoulders as if trying to wake him up from a bad dream.

“No. It doesn’t matter. I’ll do it. In fact, I’ll do it for all of us. Right now. We’ll tell him we’re done. We quit. MR. PAR...” Josh was tackled by Joe before he could finish his sentence.

“What is wrong with you? You wanna be a servant for the rest of your life?!”

“Well, yes! I’d rather be a servant than go through *this* deathly paradise!” Josh screamed grabbing Joe by the neck.

Joe began choking and struggling, when suddenly, Emily rushed up from behind and yanked him away from Josh.

“What are you *doing*?!” Emily yelled at Josh and Joe.

“Josh is being an idiot.” Joe replied, dusting his blue jeans and white Aeropostale shirt.

“Like I haven’t heard that before.” Emily pronounced.

Josh started screaming something and running away.

“WE GIVE UP! WE GIVE UP!” Josh yelled with arms waving high above his head.

“Somebody has to stop him!” Joe shouted. He ran up to Josh, caught him, and threw him to the ground. Josh started swearing and kicked Joe in the shins. Joe punched Josh in the stomach, but not before Josh put his hands over his stomach to prevent too much pain. All of a sudden, a quick, and powerful wind came and swept up everything. All the rides rose up from the ground, and flew away to the tornado in the distance.

“Thanks a lot, dummy.” Joe shouted over the piercing scream of the wind. Then he ran over to the group. But a second before he was about to say ‘Run’, he was picked up and thrown into the tornado.

“JOE!” Emily screamed.

She didn’t have to. She got picked up right then like a light feather and carefully dropped into the tornado with Joe.

## Chapter 7:

In three minutes, all the others were back in the house of Mr. Parks. Turns out, the tornado led back to the living room. They had a slightly hard fall, unlike the one earlier on the cold pavement. They got up and looked around.

“What in the world was that for?!” cried Emily.

“It was for our own good.” Josh replied smiling.

“Oh, please. Since when is being a maid ever so appealing to you?” Joe demanded.

Emily burst into laughter.

“And what’s so funny about this?” Josh bellowed.

“Nothing. It’s just the way Joe said it, it makes me laugh.” Emily chuckled.

Josh rolled his eyes. Joe kind of blushed.

Suddenly, Mr. Parks’ voice appeared and told them:

“Children! Get ready for the worst time of your life! Muahahahahaha!”

“Follow me! Now! If you want to stay alive.” Josh whispered and directed his friends to the front door of the house.

They all followed him silently, not knowing what he was planning on doing. Josh led them to the door.

“There’s no way to unlock it! Believe me! Emily and I tried before when we got locked in the house.” Carly reminded.

“Shut up.” Josh snapped.

“Freak.” Carly muttered.

“I know what I’m doing. Chill it.” Josh said a little apologetically.

“SHH!” Joe squeaked.

Josh went back to the living room, but when the others followed, he signaled them to move back. He perused the house for the utensils he was looking for. Then he found them and came back with a lamp rod, a rolling pin, and the arm of a chair. He gave the lamp rod to Joe, the rolling pin to Carly and he took the arm himself. He smashed the arm into the door. Banging and banging like Carly with the wall in the Hall of Mirrors.

Joe did the same with the lamp rod. They banged until they made a small hole in the door. Then Josh reached with his own arm and ripped a huge board from the door to make a wider opening. Out of nowhere, a bright white light flooded the house. Everything began crumbling to a black powder as if it had been pulverized. A wind came and picked up the powder and transported it to who knows where.

“Ever notice everything here gets picked up by the wind? It must have a real fun job.” Erin pointed out.

“Whoa!!” Emily shrieked as she and the others were pulled along to the other side of the room. Josh grabbed Carly and got up with all his strength against the wind. He ran, dragging a confused Carly behind him. He jammed her through the hole in the door right before the door opened completely.

“What the...” Josh stuttered.

The door shut again and somehow got rid of the hole Josh made. Josh wasn’t ready to give up yet. He took the rolling pin, and jammed one of the sides into the left edge of the door. He had made his own door handle. He pulled with all his might and opened the door just by a thin crack. The house started screaming and hooting as everything from the labyrinth burst through the windows and swirled in the center of the room. Everybody on the other side of the room got up and ran to Josh.

“GO! GO! GO! Hurry! Now! Today!” Josh barked at them.

Emily and Carly yanked at the door with Josh and made their way through quickly without wasting anytime. Alyssa and Erin held each others’ hand and looked at each other.

“See you soon, girlfriend.” Erin whimpered in a sweet yet sad way.

“We might not see each other again, so I wanted you to know that I lost your cherry lip gloss.” Alyssa moped.

Then they both ran through together.

“Go! Come on, Joe! I can hold it! Hurry up!” Josh shouted. He knew he really hold it, but if one of them had to be left behind, it should be him. He was the one who got them into this problem, so now he should suffer the consequences.

“Are you an idiot?! A beanpole like you couldn’t even hold two pounds let alone a ten pound door! Come on, Josh! Go! Just go already! GO!”

Josh snatched Joe by the neckline of his shirt and hurtled him through the door. He jammed his foot into the door, precluding it from shutting. Then he let go and jumped through the door as fast as he could. An ear piercing scream that would frighten even the scariest and horrifying of ghosts filled Josh’s ears. The door slammed shut and Josh threw his body against it to keep it from opening, just to be thrown back by the bang of something on the other side.



## Chapter 8:

Josh turned around and saw his friends, Emily, Joe, Carly, Erin, and Alyssa standing on the porch of Mr. Parks' house. They were all wearing their costumes, smiling and giggling.

"Well? Dude, are you gonna knock or what?" Joe asked.

"Huh? Oh...uh....yea....huh? Wait a minute, you were just in there....and the house was yelling...and that man..." Josh stuttered every word he said looking at the door then Joe.

"What house yells? Don't people only yell? Houses can't talk!" Emily laughed.

"What's wrong, man? You were the one who wanted to come to this house in the first place. Then knock already!" Joe said getting impatient.

"No. No..no. Let's just...lets just go home. I'm tired. It's OK. We'll come here next year." Josh announced climbing down the steps.

"Whatever. I'm with him. I wanted to go home anyways." Emily said, and went after Josh.

"Oh, lord. Help that boy now." Carly exclaimed and followed them back. Erin and Alyssa didn't want to stick out so they went with the crowd.

Joe simply stood there with his mouth gaping open.

"Seriously? Oh my god. What happened to Josh? Why'd he get all creeped out?"

Joe really didn't get it. But he didn't want to take any chances. The house was pretty freaky. He shivered and cowered to his friends.

Josh took one last look back at the house as they walked away. He saw the ghost man looking at him out of the window. His eyes were a bloody red, his skin sickly green and his face deathly pale. Mr. Parks waved a simple goodbye to him and vanished away, leaving the window empty.

## Epilogue

The day after Halloween, six children; Joshua Flamingston, Emily Curva, Joseph Agulara, Erin McCoy, Alyssa Revien, and Carly Traven, have been reported missing. They came home last night at 9:15 p.m. and went to bed. The next morning, they were found missing. No trace of them was left and the parents are offering 1,000 dollars as a reward for whoever finds them. Nobody has ever found them, nobody knows what happened to them. Fifty years have passed. Their parents have passed away and the town they once lived in is now abandoned. Except this one house all the way on the corner of the street, where drivers passing by sometimes hear screams of children and a rough man's voice yelling at them to do their work. And then there's dead silence.....

*The End*